

Not Anxious to Go

Professor Schiller of Oxford University, formerly of Cornell, writing in the *Spectator* says that "a large proportion of sincere Christians regard the prospect of heaven without the slightest enthusiasm, and even with secret aversion."

Some eminent writers are in the habit of making such sweeping generalizations, and we wonder sometimes how they get their information. It seems to us that it would be very difficult to find exactly what the majority of sincere Christians think or feel on this subject. Did the distinguished professor make a house to house canvass of every Christian community, and cross examine everybody? Did he "get the sense" of conventions on this point? Did he take any rational method of informing himself accurately? Or did he just guess at it, interpreting perhaps other people's feelings by his own? Perhaps he has an idea that everybody ought to think pretty much as he thinks, hold his opinions, indulge his feelings, take their cue from him.

Now as a matter of fact there is no possible method by which anyone can tell accurately what the exact state of feeling is among sincere Christians in regard to heaven. People are not in the habit of making an ostentatious display of their sentiments on matters of the deepest and most sensitive personal interest. Your average "sincere Christian" knows very well that if he should go around shouting hallelujah over his heavenly prospects, shrewd people would inspect the locks to their hen houses and money drawers to see if they were all right. Such ebullitions of emotionalism used to be taken at par value, but times and ideas have changed, and people are not putting on exhibition their enthusiasm about the strictly personal elements of religious experience. In all matters concerning the kingdom, the moral elevation of the people, the salvation of souls, the prosperity of the church, they are enthusiastic enough to make substantial sacrifices. They give time and money and energy to the Lord's work, and after all that is the best test of the best enthusiasm. This has come to be a practical age in religion as well as in business, when the man who works is regarded as of more value than the man who merely talks, more representative of a sound and sane Christianity.

Commenting upon Professor Schiller's statement, some one else remarks that "sincere Christians are not anxious, under ordinary circumstances to leave their earthly homes and enter heaven immediately." Well, what of it? What would you think of a man who had hired in your field, who before the day was done should come running after all his wages? He leaves his work unfinished, and holds out his hands for the pay. Now "every sincere Christian" knows that the Lord has put him here in this vineyard, that his duty is here, his work, his responsibility; that furthermore the Lord expects him to stay out his appointed time, finish his appointed task, and do it too in a manly, faithful way without whining or complaining. Take a Christian father for example, who has little children growing up around him who look to him for protection, training, guidance, Christian instruction, and give that man the choice of entering heaven immediately, or staying here with those who need him so much, and as long as they need him: If he is a sane man with a healthy and adequate sense of his duty, what do you

suppose would be his choice? Our own opinion is that if he should deliberately choose to abandon those who are so dependent upon him in order that he might enjoy heaven at once,—elect to leave them in the world to get along the best way they could while he would be singing with angels,—that if he should be willing to desert them in this way, and to desert his post of duty, his responsibility, he wouldn't be fit for heaven, and wouldn't get there. The same may be said of your pastor, your deacon, your church member, however obscure his station. Not for anything you can mention would he deliberately choose to desert his post of duty before his time, even to go to heaven. If an angel should come along and make him such a proposition, he would decline it and suspect that after all his dazzling visitor was no angel, but something else. Your "sincere Christian" is not worrying because he isn't jerked up to heaven right off. The Lord's appointment and the Lord's approval is his heaven, here or elsewhere, in the valley of tribulation and labor, or by and by on the mount of transfiguration.

Ungallant

Bishop Coleman in a recent speech at the meeting of the Church Temperance Society had the audacity to say that drunkenness was increasing among women. If the Bishop's information is as great as his courage, his statement is sufficient to arrest the serious attention of the most indifferent. It may be true of the city populations, but we do not believe that it is true of the country. That it should be true anywhere is appalling. All forms of dissipation find a friendly soil in the world of wealth and fashion, and since the Bishop's church is found mostly in that world, bedizened and bedaubed with unlimited lucre, doubtless he has exceptional opportunities to discover the sad state of things he tells us about. He may be considered ungallant to mention such a thing, but he evidently doesn't want to assume the responsibility of hiding it. There ought to be no compromise with a wickedness that will seek to pollute and destroy the sacred temple of womanhood, whether in city or country, and if there ever was a paramount duty lying upon the Christian conscience, it is to devise ways and means for the overthrow of this satan in the midst of our beloved land?

A Means of Grace

A sensational, and very often an unclean daily paper can now be found in nearly every home, and there is no telling the amount of mischief it does, particularly where there are young people who are just forming the reading habit, and gaining their first vivid impression of the world. How different is the mission and the work of a good church paper. Parents should certainly desire the very best moral influence in the home, and in this respect nothing can take the place of the church paper. It will not simply carry along with it a religious influence, but will emphasize it by its special interest and influence as the voice of our church. Nothing can take its place in the matter of interesting your children in the church. Do you wish them to be safely gathered in from the world, into the shelter of the fold? Then among the agencies for so important an object, make the church paper a permanent institution in your home.